

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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State Library Volunteer Appreciation Awards Ceremony Set for September 23

(HELENA)--- The Montana Talking Book Library (MTBL) will honor its volunteers at a Volunteer Appreciation Day event set for September 23 at the Fort Harrison Service Club.

MTBL Regional Librarian Christie Briggs said, "Our 100-plus volunteers are essential to the Talking Book Library. They are committed to serving our patrons and have made a difference in the lives of countless Montanans." She added, "The number of volunteer hours donated to the Montana Talking Book Library equals the work of six full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. We could not offer the quality of service we do without these generous, dedicated people."

Ellen Baumler of Helena is scheduled to give the keynote address at **12:30 pm**. Ellen earned her master's degree in English from the University of Missouri-Kansas City and her Ph.D. in English, classics and history from the University of Kansas. Since 1992, she has coordinated the National Register sign program at the Montana Historical Society and is the Society's interpretive historian. A member of the Montana Committee for the Humanities Speakers Bureau and the Western Writers of America, Ellen is the author of *Spirit Tailings* (MHS Press, 2002); co-author with Dave Shors of *Lost Places, Hidden Treasures*, (Far Country Press, 2002); and editor of *Girl from the Gulches: The Story of Mary Ronan* (MHS Press, 2003).

A variety of awards will be presented beginning at **12:55 pm** to the following Helena-area residents:

The Special Appreciation Award is given to a volunteer who contributes to MTBL in a number of ways. This year's recipient is Dorothy Carpenter. In 1997, Dorothy started volunteering at MTBL and has contributed an immeasurable amount of service to its patrons. She also volunteers at the Montana Historical Society and is an active member of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees. Dorothy is also a volunteer recruiter for MTBL.

The Telephone Pioneer Appreciation Award is given to a veteran telephone pioneer member. This year's recipient, Glen Rasmussen, is being recognized for his extensive contribution to TBL patrons through efficient processing and equipment maintenance. Glen has volunteered at the library since 1998 and has contributed over 19,000 hours of his time.

This year's Recording Team of the Year Award goes to Jean Smith, Darlene Lloyd, and Giles Walker. Jean, a volunteer since 1996, is the reader of the team and has narrated

22 books and 11 magazines. Darlene has been a volunteer monitor since 1995. Giles has been a reviewer since 1995.

MTBL will also honor Lea Blunn, who has served as a Library volunteer for 20 years, and Tom Basinger, a retired Telephone Pioneer who has volunteered for 35 years.

The Montana Talking Book Library, a program of the Montana State Library, offers alternative reading materials for nearly 3,000 Montana citizens who have visual, physical, or reading challenges which prevent them from reading standard print. All materials are provided to patrons free of charge. MTBL's collection consists of more than 48,000 recorded book titles, 80 magazines, and 200 descriptive videos.

For more information about the event, contact Diane Gunderson, Coordinator of Volunteer Services, at (406) 444-5398 or at dgunderson@state.mt.us.

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